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OLC 72-0565

5 May 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of Departmental Legislative Liaison Officers on the State Authorization Bill, S. 3526

1. I attended a meeting today at the State Department of legislative liaison officers of various departments and agencies to discuss the 10 percent overseas personnel reduction and dissemination of information provisions in the State Department Authorization bill (S. 3526) as reported out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Marshall Wright, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, and was attended by the following representatives:

Agriculture - William Galbraith
Commerce - Sol Mosher
Defense - Colonel George L. J. Dalferes
Health, Education, and Welfare - Frank Samuels
Justice - Hugh Durham
National Aeronautics and Space Administration - Mr. Lothman
State - James Halmo
State, Agency for International Development -
Transportation - Thomas Smarz
U.S. Information Agency - Charles Ablard

2. Mr. Wright opened the meeting by distributing copies of the material which we had prepared and forwarded to State which included our statement in support of a motion to strike subsection (a) of section 504 of S. 3526 (the 10 percent ceiling provision) with the accompanying recommended amendment; and our statement and suggested amendment on section 205 (containing restrictions on the preparation and dissemination of information abroad).

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3. Mr. Wright pointed out that on the basis of CIA contacts with Mr. Ed Braswell, Chief Counsel, Senate Armed Services Committee, Braswell had said he thought Senator Stennis would go on the floor to get a specific exemption from section 504(a) for the Agency, but there was some question as to whether he would be willing to lead an all-out attack to strike section 504(a) on jurisdictional grounds. The group discussed tactics in coping with this personnel cut including the wisdom of having Senator Stennis, who is a hawk, lead the fight and having this turn into a hawk vs dove issue. But when the question was raised as to who else would lead the fight only Senators Magnuson and Scott were regarded as being at all effective. Even then, it would be difficult for these Senators to attack this provision on the only ground which the group felt was an effective one--committee jurisdiction.

4. In a general discussion of the personnel reduction provision, various agency representatives such as Justice and Commerce said they really didn't feel they could generate much interest on the part of their committee people on the Hill in opposing this provision since the number of their personnel affected was quite small. After Mr. Wright polled the group as to whether or not these cuts would really create any problem for them despite the small numbers involved, these representatives focused more precisely on the problem. A list of Senators was circulated and various agencies agreed to contact specific Senators in an effort to obtain their support for an amendment which would strike the 10 percent cut entirely. I agreed we would contact the following Senators or their staffs:

Gordon Allott (D., Colo.)
Harry F. Byrd, Jr. (I., Va.)
Allen J. Ellender (D., La.) -- (I said while I thought Senator Ellender would support a specific CIA amendment, I had some doubt he would vote to strike the cut in view of his basic philosophy that the U.S. has too many people overseas.)
Henry M. Jackson (D., Wash.)
Charles H. Percy (R., Ill.)
William B. Spong, Jr. (D., Va.)
John C. Stennis (D., Miss.)
Milton R. Young (R., N.Dak.)

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5. During the meeting Mr. Wright made a phone call to Ed Braswell and asked him how he felt Senator Stennis would react to managing an amendment to strike section 504(a) if he had the support of a number of other Senators including several committee chairmen. Braswell told Wright he thought Senator Stennis would be reluctant to take on this job especially since he was leading the fight against the Case/Church provision to cut off funds for operations in Southeast Asia.

6. Mr. Wright said he would talk with Mr. Tom Korologos, of the White House staff, as soon as he could get to him--probably not before Monday--to obtain his views on a possible floor leader for the section 504(a) fight. He also asked the agency representatives present to check with their organizations to see who would be willing to issue press releases expressing their opposition to a 10 percent cut and asked that Bill Blair, of State's Bureau of Public Affairs, be given the gist of these statements so he could integrate them with a statement the State representatives hope they can get Under Secretary John N. Irwin to make on this subject.

7. Mr. Wright pointed out that while the State Department had not asked the Committee to insert the 10 percent personnel cut in the bill in many instances it would be difficult for State to ask Senators who are friends of the Department to oppose this section since they feel it is in State's best interest to reduce the number of non-State Department personnel abroad. Wright urged those present to make an all-out effort to oppose this legislation. He said unless a united front is presented against it a 10 percent reduction was very likely to remain in the law. He added that it would be a serious mistake to let this provision go in the Senate on the assumption it could be knocked out by the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House because Foreign Affairs will have a number of provisions in the Senate bill to contend with and cannot possibly win on all of them.

8. In view of the time taken in discussing section 504(a), Wright did not dwell at length on the dissemination of information section (205). He did ask those present, however, to take a close look at this provision and talk it over within their agencies and to let Mr. Ablard, USIA, know if it posed any problems for them. Wright mentioned USIA and CIA were working on this and Ablard added that as soon as he could make contact with Mr. Korologos, USIA and CIA would discuss this section with him and then meet with Senator Dominick or Senator Baker to see if they would offer an amendment to eliminate problems which both of our agencies have with this section.

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9. Following the meeting I spoke briefly with Messrs. Wright and Ablard and suggested that Wright ask Korologos to approach Senator Stennis directly to see if he would offer an amendment to strike all of section 405(a) since the Senator might have an easier time of it on the floor on this basis with considerable support than he would have in arguing for a specific exemption for CIA. I also expressed grave reservations as to the wisdom of precipitating a floor discussion on section 205 unless we had very strong arguments which did not involve the Agency and we were fairly certain of sufficient support. I said I thought a Senate floor debate with a negative vote would make it more difficult for the House members to beat down the Senate conferees than no Senate discussion at all. Both Wright and Ablard STAT INTL agreed with this assessment of the situation.

[redacted]
Deputy Legislative Counsel

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